



McDonough District Hospital

525 East Grant Street | Macomb, IL 61455

May 13, 2008

(309) 833-4101 | www.mdh.org

Carlos Fernandez, Station Manager WGEM,
513 Hampshire
Quincy, IL 62301

Dear Carlos,

It is a pleasure to write this letter indicating my appreciation of the role WGEM television and radio has played in providing comprehensive involvement on issues of local interest to residents of the tri-state region.

As the current director of public relations and fund development at McDonough District Hospital and in my past 30 years of service with the public relations program at Western Illinois University and 25 years on the Macomb City Council; I can say without reservation that WGEM has been a strong advocate for the inclusion of local programming. WGEM has always maintained a strong interactive relationship with communities in the region and responded to the needs of our citizens through programs and information.

Creating a FCC compliance system of rules to dictate local actions is a misguided effort when it comes to asking regional television and radio media such as WGEM to respond to criteria which will most likely hinder the high quality of programming already provided. Without prompting by rule, WGEM has been an advocate for regional economic development through coverage and support of the Tri-State Summit, a series of seminars which bring regional leaders together to discuss important issues. They interview political candidates and elected officials to provide information to viewers.

WGEM reporters attend to the issues of concern in health care (my current employer), education (my former University) and government services (City of Macomb) and more. The staff of WGEM responds appropriately to requests for news coverage and reflects the interests of Macomb citizens as well as Quincy, Keokuk, Hannibal and other areas in the broadcast region.

The news and administrative staff take an interest in Macomb Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Development programs, attend civic functions and participate in community celebrations. We are particularly fortunate that WGEM has a satellite office in Macomb which provides immediate access to all McDonough County residents who wish to bring issues of interest to the attention of the station.

WGEM takes its mission in emergency weather notification seriously with prompt announcements over the air when conditions threaten residents in any portion of their viewing area. The station recently sponsored emergency weather radio programs in several cities and does an excellent job of covering emergency preparedness and documenting community response to disasters.

My direct experience with WGEM began in the 1970s when I would take university representatives to Quincy to tape public service programs. That opportunity still exists today as I watch the programs on community issues aired by the station. The actions of WGEM as a broadcasting station and corporate citizen have been in the best interest of the community they serve. They understand local programming is a key element of being a success in the region and I do not see the need for regulation beyond the current structures of FCC licensing.

Cordially,

John C. Maguire

Director of Public Relations and Fund Development

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